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ABSTRACT

A multi-year study examined whether elementary school students can engage in historical thinking in a meaningful way, and what kind of writing activities best serve this purpose. Subjects were 17 students of varying language proficiency levels selected as the focus of research from the entire class of 31 primarily Hispanic and African-American students in a split fourth/fifth grade classroom in an inner-city school in Oakland, California. Data on historical thinking was collected during a 6-week period when the students were engaged in a unit on American Indians and Spanish colonization in the Southwest. The unit included two writing assignments: a "day in the life" activity concerning American Indian life, and a mock correspondence describing colonial New Mexico. Writing assignments were evaluated and analyzed. Results indicated that: (1) most students wrote quite detailed narratives for the first assignment, but most stopped far short of perspective taking; (2) several of the students had difficulty, in their role as Spanish colonists in the second assignment, distancing themselves from the Indians; and (3) more of the students succeeded in the second assignment than in the first in creating characters who thought and acted in culturally and historically appropriate ways. Findings suggest that at least some fifth-grade students with somewhat limited language skills can engage in perspective taking. The most persuasive explanation for the students' marginal success may be that most of them lacked sufficient knowledge about how things were done in the past to succeed in the assignment. (Contains 24 references.) (RS)

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DELIVERABLE: PROJECT 2

WRITING TO LEARN HISTORY IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES

DEFINING AND ASSESSING HISTORICAL THINKING: A TECHNICAL REPORT

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December, 1994

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DEFINING AND ASSESSING HISTORICAL THINKING: A TECHNICAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

The Writing to Learn History Project at the University of California, Berkeley is investigating how writing can facilitate the development of children's historical thinking. It is a multi-year study supported by the National Center for the Study of Writing and Literacy and funded by the United States Department of Education. The study has posed two principal questions. Can elementary school students, including children in inner-city schools who have limited English proficiency, engage in historical thinking in a meaningful way? What kind of writing activities best serve this purpose?

These questions are problematic. In the first place, there is a lack of consensus about what is historical thinking. It has been defined by cognitive theorists, empirical researchers, and curriculum developers in quite different ways. Moreover, little has been written about how to assess such thinking--however defined--in instructional settings. This paper describes one aspect of historical thinking investigated by the Writing to Learn History Project in a 5th-grade classroom in Oakland, California and how criteria used to assess it were developed. The study has implications for future research on historical thinking and for the development of a thinking curriculum in history.

A substantial body of theory and research concerned with historical thinking has focused on the development of logical thinking using history materials. It is grounded in Piagetian theory. In the mid-1960s, E. A. Peal, a British psychologist, reported that stages of development similar to those which Piaget found in mathematical and scientific thinking could also be identified in historical reasoning (Peal, 1965, 1967). During the next two decades, a great deal of work was done in Britain elaborating Peel's findings, most notably by Hallam (1966, 1967). The principal finding of the Peel-Hallam school was that students reached the concrete and formal operational stage in historical thinking considerably later than had Piaget's students in the other disciplines. "Hallam's students reached the concrete operational stage at about age 13, rather than at age 7 or 8 for Piaget's students; formal operational thinking began at about age 16 in history, compared to age 12 in Paiget's research" (Downey and Levstik, 1988). This line of research has not been fruitful for investigating historical thinking among elementary school students, as it assumes that only pre-operational thinking is possible in the lower grades. This places a severe constraint on instruction designed to emphasize historical thinking. It has also been severely criticized for misrepresenting historical thought, which may be an autonomous domain quite unlike logical thinking in mathematics and science (Levstik, 1986).

Researchers primarily interested in historical thinking among younger children have focused on their understanding of historical time. This work is rooted in empirical research undertaken by psychologists interested in children's understanding of time concepts

generally (Oakden and Sturt, 1922; Ames, 1946; Bradley, 1947; Springer, 1952; Jahoda, 1962). Some recent research, conducted primarily by educators rather than psychologists, has focused on the development of children's sense of historical time (Poster, 1973; Lello, 1980; Levstik and Pappas, 1987; Thornton and Vukelich, 1988; Downey, 1994). These researchers have been interested primarily in children's grasp of chronology and understanding of broad time categories. They have found that children's understanding of time concepts follows a developmental progression and that children can understand general time concepts in the early elementary grades. While this research suggests that history can be introduced at lower grade levels than many educators have assumed, it has little to say about the role of instruction in the development of historical thinking.

A third approach to historical thinking has emphasized the development of historical empathy. Most of the theoretical and empirical work on historical empathy has been done in Britain, where educators have focused on developing curriculum that emphasizes historical thinking (Samec, 1979). The goal is to enable students to project themselves imaginatively into an historical situation and to let them use their "mind's eye" to bring intuitive observation and judgment into play (Portal. 1987). Ashby and Lee (1987) describe the achievement of empathy as "where we get to when we have successfully reconstructed other peoples' beliefs, values, goals, and attendant feelings" (p.63).

The empathy approach to historical thinking seems quite promising. While no one suggests that historical empathy is easy to

acquire, it does seem to be teachable. "Empathy," Ashby and Lee emphasize, "is an achievement, not a particular process" (1987, p.63). It is achieved by acquiring knowledge, developing a range of skills, and by being willing to empathize with people whose ideas and values "are not one's own, and with which one may profoundly disagree" (p. 63). While developmental constraints may come into play at various points, no one has yet suggested that elementary students are incapable of historical empathy.

Indeed, current classroom practice suggests that many teachers assume that activities that call for empathetic responses are especially appropriate for elementary school students. Teachers often use activities that engage students in imaginative reconstructions about how people lived in the past. Among those commonly used are writing assignments that involve role playing. Such assignments ask students to write first-person narratives from the perspective of some imaginary character who could have lived at a particular time. It may be a story about a "day in my life," mock journal entries or letter writing activities. Such writing activities may provide an easy entrée for the more systematic introduction of historical thinking into the school curriculum, as teachers are familiar with the genre and students seem to like doing it.

However promising in terms of classroom practice, empathy does have its own set of conceptual and definitional problems. As empathy has gained popularity among curriculum developers, especially in Britain, it also attracted a growing number of critics. Boddington (1980) has pointed out that the term itself is highly ambiguous. Is empathy simply a synonym for understanding others,

as in imaginatively putting oneself in another's place, or does it involve an affective response to another's situation. Is emotional identification essential to historical empathy or do the attendant feelings obstruct understanding? Knight (1989) argues that the very use of the term empathy is an obstacle to clear thinking. "Empathy is a unitary construct, carrying with it the implication that there is a single, discrete operation, 'empathizing', which the learner develops over time" (p. 46). Instead, he suggests that teachers concentrate on the analysis of the multiplicity of factors that are involved in trying to understand people in the past.

In seeking an operational definition of historical thinking, the Writing to Learn History Project has taken a middle ground. It has adopted a position similar to the one that Boddington has described as a "weak sense of empathy" rather than the more strongly affective kind. "Such an activity," Boddington (1980) suggests, "might be seen then not primarily as a creative activity, but rather as a rational, intellectual activity concerned with explaining actions, attitudes and concepts which are alien to our own" (p. 18). To more clearly differentiate between the two, the project uses the term "perspective taking" instead of empathy. To engage in historical perspective taking is to attempt to understand an historical character's frame of reference, without assuming that one can or needs to identify with his or her feelings. The project also assumes, along with Seixas (1993) and Knight, that empathy or perspective taking is only one of a number of "critical elements of historical thinking."

While this may resolve the definitional problem, it does not make perspective taking an easy task. Explaining attitudes or actions alien to our own is surely one of the most difficult aspects of historical reconstruction. How can one really step into the shoes of someone who lived in the past when it is impossible to leave the present behind? Obviously, perspective taking, even in this non-affective sense, is not fully attainable. The question is, as Seixas (1993) suggests, how can we confront the difficulties inherent in this task in ways that help students become more expert at doing it?

The time clearly is at hand for history educators in the United States to be raising such questions. Historical thinking is now emerging as a popular topic in school reform literature here much as it did in Britain two decades ago. The development of historical thinking has become one of the major justifications for history's place in the public school curriculum. The California History-Social Science Framework and a companion document entitled With History-Social Science For All: Access for Every Student (California Department of Education, 1987, 1992), stressed the importance of helping students develop a sense of historical empathy. A national curriculum report issued in 1988 by the Bradley Commission on History in the Schools referred to valuable "habits of mind" that the study of history makes possible (Bradley Commission, 1988). In 1994, the National History Standards Project included historical thinking among the standards that it urged state and schools districts to adopt. Its publication, National Standards for United States History (National Center for History in the Schools, 1994) accorded historical thinking equal status with knowledge or content standards. The entrance of

historical thinking into the arena of public policy lends some degree of urgency to the task of defining it and devising ways to assess it.

The question of assessment poses its own set of problems. "Traditionally," Boddington (1980) writes, "such assessment is modeled upon the 'imagine you were. . .' type of question" (p.16). But, as he points out, this approach to testing invites highly affective and individualistic responses. It may even be inappropriate to determine in advance what is or is not a good answer. "Since both the response of the student and the perceptions of the assessor are grounded in different and unique experiences, it is quite possible that we might not recognize a 'good answer' when we see it" (p. 17). Questions that prompt affective responses also may not be appropriate to evaluate perspective-taking that emphasize explanation rather than empathy. If perspective taking is to be proposed as a central component of historical thinking in the classroom, it is essential that appropriate criteria be developed to assess the quality of the performance.

THE RESEARCH AT FLATLAND SCHOOL

During the fall semester of 1993, the Writing to Learn History Project conducted research in a 5th-grade classroom in Oakland to investigate whether students with limited English proficiency could successfully engage in historical thinking. Perspective taking was one of several components that were involved. The project director was especially concerned about whether such activities were accessible to all students in classrooms in which the level of language proficiency varied considerably. Are perspective taking and other elements of historical thinking a suitable basis for democratic

curriculum reform or do they pose the specter of a two-tiered curriculum in which English proficient students engage in historical thinking while others memorize information and take multiple-choice tests?

The research took place in a split fourth/fifth-grade classroom in an inner-city school in Oakland, California. It was a class predominantly composed of Hispanic and African-American students. Although the entire class of 31 students participated in the instruction, 17 students were selected as the focus of the research. All but two of the 4th grade students were excluded from the sample as well as the 5th grade students who could only speak and write in Spanish. The two 4th grade students who remained in the group were comparable in age and in language proficiency to the 5th grade students. As it was assumed that the quality of perspective taking would reflect differences in language proficiency, the 17 students were identified according to high, intermediate, and low levels of English language proficiency. This identification was based on their performance on an English writing sample and the teacher's assessment of language proficiency. All of one of the students was born in the United States and all listed English as their primary language. However, Spanish was the dominant language spoken at home for 8 of the 17 students.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

Data on historical thinking was collected during a 6-week period when the students were engaged in a unit on American Indians and Spanish colonization in the Southwest. The unit included two writing assignments that called for perspective taking. The first

was a "day in the life" activity, in which the students were to assume the identity of a American Indian and write a first-person account of what they did on a typical day. They were told that they should take a "mind trip" back to the times when Indians were the only people who lived in what is now the United States. It took place during the second week of instruction, after the students had completed a week's instruction that focused on comparative Indian cultures.

At the beginning of the activity, the students were given a list of questions to which they were encouraged to respond. It included such items as: What did you do that day? What kind of dwelling do you live in? What kind of clothes are you wearing? They were asked to write in the first person, present tense and as they wrote they should keep asking the question, "Does This Make Indian Sense?" It was explained that Indians belonged to pre-literate cultures and that they would not actually have written such accounts, but that it was important for the research project to have a written record of their responses. As resource materials, each student had an information packets on one of five different tribes. Their character that they were role playing had to be a member of that tribe. These packets included pictures and other information about food, dwellings, and clothing. The students wrote for half an hour each day on three successive class periods. Emphasized that their writing was to be a rough draft copy, and that they were not to worry about erasing or spelling.

The second writing assignment was a mock correspondence, in which they were asked to take the perspective of a Spanish colonist. This assignment came after ten 75-minute class periods in which

they had learned about the Spanish colonization of the American Southwest. It consisted of two activities. In the first, they were to write a letter to a cousin in Spain describing their life in colonial New Mexico. The question was whether they would be able to shift from the Indian to the Spanish perspective? They were given a set of questions comparable to those handed out at the beginning of the Indian writing assignment:

1. Where do you live: village, farm, rancho?
2. What is your name?
3. What does you house look like?
4. What does a room in your house look like?
5. What are you wearing?
6. What did you eat that day?
7. What did you do with your friends?
8. What did t he grown-ups do? (or children if they are taking the role of an adult)

In the second activity, the students had to respond to a letter from the Spanish cousin received in reply to their first letter. In it, the cousin accused them of unfairly taking over the Indians' land and suggested they all move back to Mexico. The question was whether the students could maintain the Spanish colonists' perspective when it came into direct conflict with their earlier commitment to the Indians' point of view?

The students wrote for about 70 minutes over 2 days on the first part of the assignment, with three of the most promising papers read and discussed half-way through, to serve as models for those

having difficulty. They spent a comparable period of time on the second writing activity.

A set of criteria was developed to assess the quality of the students' perspective taking. In the students' writings about an historical period, what qualifies as "viewing the world from another's perspective" and what does not? Three criteria were adopted at the outset of the research. First, it was assumed that successful perspective taking would require expression through a first-person narrative. It would presumably require a sense of personal involvement on the student's part, and that first-person narrative writing would facilitate this. Secondly, they had to include enough descriptive detail to lodge the character in the appropriate place and time. The assumption was that contextualization and perspective taking were intimately related. Finally, it seemed axiomatic that historical errors and anachronism were incompatible with successful perspective taking. This set of criteria proved to be seriously inadequate, although that did not become apparent until much of the data was collected and analyzed.

RESULTS

In response to the first assignment, most of the students wrote quite detailed narratives that described the setting in which their historical persona lived. They had little difficulty visualizing a landscape much different than that which they see around them today. They could also reconstruct parts of the routine of everyday life, such as Indians bathing in a river and hunting with bows and arrows. They described food that was different from that of their own time, recognized that their Indian persona wore home-made

clothes, and surrounded their character with historically appropriate artifacts (misspellings and punctuation errors in the original will be retained throughout this report):

> "Me and my friends went to get berries to eat [for] dinner." (Peter)
>
> "My friend is gathering roots, seeds, and berries." (Susan)
>
> "My wife made my clothes" (Alberto).
>
> "So I got my bow and arrows and left my dwelling that is made of tree branches and animel hides." (Susan)
>
> "I am washing my her [hair] with the soap roth [root]." (Maria)

While the narratives were not entirely free of historical error, the majority of the students created reasonably accurate historical contexts.

However, there were clear differences between the three language proficiency groups. Samuel, who was in the top group, wrote a narrative about Washakie, a Shoshoni leader, that presented a believable Indian perspective. His first paragraph read as follows:

> "When I went outside acspecting to see the usual rouged land but to my surprise I see the eagle king of All birds A coyotay A big brown bear A few tree[s] right ther And there I knew I was blessed. I was whering my usual cloths made of fine be[a]r hide at breakfast that my wife had mde for me. I ate some Acron squash when the chief Aproach me and he ws saying, Washakie, you have been blesed by the Anamals therefor when I die you will take my place as chief, but until

then we shall dance for our sellabrashon. The next day he died."

Washakie's encountering an eagle, coyote, and bear on the same morning was a sign that he had been blessed and was the rightful successor to the village chief. After the death of the chief, Washakie became the new village leader.

On the other hand, James, who was in the lowest proficiency group, wrote a paragraph that was little more than a list of things Indians did:

> "They would play Indian Games. they wold hunt for foods. Rabbit, wolf, bird, deer. They lived in hogans. It would be fun to live in a hogan. We didn't have shoes. We didn't have cloths. we work on getting food and cloths. They traveled from many places. California to Mexico. An teh Indians would suck the blood from deer and other animals." (James)

There was also a quantitative difference between the upper two groups and the bottom group. The more proficient students tended to write longer and more detailed narratives.

The second assignment, the two letters written by a Spanish settler to a cousin in Spain, produced comparable results. As in the Indian activity, the students had little difficulty providing detailed descriptions of their house, their clothing, and their daily routine. The following references are representative:

> "The inside [of his house] has a few windows A fireplace And a low table And some pot and pans and beans. And I am

wearing A subraro and some plan cloths A vest a pants and a white shirt." (Samuel)

"Today I eat tacos de carne and beans and chili." (Enrico)

"I have a big house. It is made out of adobe." (Alonzo)

"I play with my friend Monice. We are best friend." (Sara)

"The next day we have a rodeo and after the rodeo we dance all night." (Susan)

There were several instances of historical anachronisms. For example, Susan's adobe house had "3 rooms and 2 bathrooms," while Samuel's village on the New Mexican frontier "has lots of houses and churches and lots of nice people and I like the restaurants." But, for the most part, the students' descriptions of the context in which their character lived were historically accurate.

As detailed and generally accurate as the students' narratives were, most of them stopped far short of perspective taking in any meaningful sense of that term. The failure to present an historical perspective was most pronounced for the Indian assignment. Only Samuel's portrayal of Washakie came close to presenting the world view of a Shoshoni. The most serious problems were not factual inaccuracies, but what might be called structural anachronisms. Students, as Seixas (1993) has written, "may mistakenly assume that people living in different circumstances nevertheless thought in ways essentially similar to themselves." The problem lies in the students "failure to realize what they don't know about the past." (Seixas, 1993). They also assumed that Indians acted in ways similar

to them. No amount of context, however detailed and factually accurate, was sufficient to save most of the students from this pitfall.

The students had great difficulty disengaging their character's thoughts and actions from their own time. There were glaring anachronisms in the structure and processes of everyday life. The daily routines that were described were very much like the routines of present-day children. The characters got up in the morning, bathed, put on their clothes, ate breakfast and went out to play.

Sara's character was an Apache girl, whose morning routine included waking up her sister and brother:

> "Then I went to my sister teepee, then my b[r]other['s] teepee. I woke them and took them to the river to wach there hands and face."

She assumed that Indian children slept in separate teepees, just as American children today have individual bedrooms. Donald had the Indian children in his narrative celebrating a birthday with parties and gifts.

The students' narratives also were oblivious to the difficulties American Indians faced in finding enough food to stay alive. Donald's character and his friend killed a deer and a buffalo one day. "And then we toke it home to eat it lader on and then it was giting dark and we put a fire and eat the bufalo and deer all together" There was no sense of the skill required to hunt and kill wild game, of hunting as a communal effort. The same was true for Susan: "I walk to the river. I see a bear. I'm runing back to my dwelling. . . . Im goig to get my bows and arrow. . . . I shot him. I am going to pick him up and take him home. . . . " Both students make hunting

as easy as buying groceries from Safeway. Although Susan who wrote one of the most carefully detailed narratives, her character thought and acted like a modern-day girl. "Today I wake up and ate a squirrel leg and drink a berrire drink," as if convenience foods and bottled juice were staples of Indian life.

Some of the problems the students had with perspective taking reoccurred in the second assignment. In assessing their ability to shift from the Indian to the Spanish colonial perspective, the critical test was their Spanish character's perception of Indians. The first letter called for at least some mention of Indians, as the cousin in Spain had expressed an interest in Indians. The second letter directly confronted the issue of Spain's taking over Indian land, as the cousin in his/her reply had suggested that the Spanish give back the land to the Indians.

Several of the students had difficulty, in their role as Spanish colonists, distancing themselves from the Indians. Anna had foreshadowed this problem in her first letter to her cousin, by including the Indians among her friends and playmates.

> The Indians and os we are good friens. The indians p[l]ay with os is fun wen you come to New Mexico I will thell We are good family with all the pueblo indians. (Anna)

Even Sara's character Elvira, whose family owned an Apache slave, wrote that "Indian are very nice I have some Indian friend."

The resistance to placing themselves in opposition to Indians was decidedly more pronounced in the second letter to the cousin in Spain. Five of the students agreed that the land should be returned to the Indians. Enrico and James would do so immediately:

> "Juan de Onate took land away from the Indians but I think I am going to give back them land and leave New Mexico I am gona come back to Spain. . . . I don't whant to take away the Indians land be cause we have are one [own] land in Spain. . . but anyway this land is thems." (Enrico)
>
> "I think we should give New Mexico back to the Indians. . . . The Indians must be said [sad]." (James)

Sara, Ernesto, and Donald also agreed that they should give the Indians back their land. But Sara concluded that there was nothing she could do about it, and Ernesto and Donald decided that the other Spanish colonists would get mad at them if they made such a proposal.

However, seven students made reasoned arguments about why they should not give back the land. They justified keeping it in two ways, both of which reflected a creditable Spanish perspective. Gloria's character would not leave because her family had a stake in the land.

> "I am not going to leave New Mexico for anything. Its because this is wher I was rased as a small kid and my family came here. And ther is no way that anything or anybody is going to make me go away from my familys land!" (Gloria)

Paula's character took a similar stand.

> "I know that the Indians were here befor us but we had to take it away because we didn't have no place to live

> and now we live here and we are not giving it back." (Paula)

The second argument was a justification based on the reciprocal relationship that had, in fact, emerged between the Pueblo and Spanish villages in New Mexico. Samuel phrased it best:

"They said we can live on their land. . . . When Juan de Onate took their land and gave the[m] nothing in return that was unfair and it fair because they give us land wnd we help them fight back when other tribe try to raid them." (Samuel) That was also the position taken by Anna, Enrico, Susan, and Maria.

As the arguments for keeping the land suggest, more of the students succeeded in the Spanish assignment than in the previous one in creating characters who thought and acted in culturally and historically appropriate ways. Enrico's character liked to ride horses and enjoyed dancing.

> "I went wihte my friends to dance la quebrodita that is a new dance that I like I have a horse that I call the black Rayo because is black and run so fast." (Enrico)

Gloria invented games for her character to play that probably have no modern-day equivalent.

> "We played with rocks and sang a song a[nd] passed the rocks to the next person but still singing the song." (Gloria)

The people in Sara and Samuel's family slept on the floor, presumably on pallets, and not in modern beds. Elvira, who was Sara's colonial persona, lived a very pre-modern existence. Her father was a Spanish soldier who was at home only at Christmas and on feast days, her family owned an Indian slave, and she did not go

to school. Nearly half of the papers had at least brief passages of believable perspective taking.

CONCLUSION:

Perspective taking was a difficult challenge for these 5th grade students. In neither assignment did the majority of the group manage to see the world through the eyes of a person from the historical time period in any meaningful sense of that term. The Indian assignment proved to be more difficult than the Spanish colonial one in this respect, which suggests that the more remote the period and culture, the more difficult the challenge. It became clear from the students' writings that perspective taking does not necessarily emerge full blown from detailed and contextualized narrative. In most of the students' narratives, the amassing of exotic details about everyday life did not lead to an understanding that life also was structured in exotic ways. The students simply hung their factual historical information on a framework of assumptions borrowed from the present. This problem cut across the three language-proficiency groups. Students in all three groups had difficulty getting beyond the present. However, some of the students did succeed in some measure, with nearly half doing so with the Spanish assignment. That may be as significant as the fact that most of the students failed on one or the other of the two assignments.

Is it possible for 5th grade students with somewhat limited language skills to engage in perspective taking? This research suggests that at least some of them can. Language proficiency was a limiting factor. The seven students who were most successful with the Spanish assignment were equally divided between the two

higher language proficiency groups. None of the lower-group students succeeded in either assignment.

However, the failure of many of the students to engage in perspective taking may have resulted from factors other than language constraints. It may be a reflection of the way the assignment was structured. The assignment called for writing a first-person narrative. The use of "I" rather than "he" or "she" may have strengthened the students' obvious tendency to read their own values and routines into the past. Perhaps a story written in the third-person would have been more successful. The anachronism of having a preliterate Indian character write a narrative also may have helped blur the boundaries between past and present.

The initial criteria for assessing perspective taking that the project had developed clearly was inadequate. It emphasized the importance of contextualization through descriptive writing with historically accurate details. The detailed contexts in which the students placed their historical persona may have put them at the threshold of perspective taking. But most of them could not step across. Detailed knowledge about shelter, clothing, and food were simply were not very helpful in constructing the world view of Indians or Spanish colonists. To step over that threshold, the students needed to do more than describe the people and their environment. Their narratives should have been explanatory as well as descriptive. They needed to be able to explain why the people behaved, thought, and interacted with the environment the way they did and why these aspects of life were so very different than they

are today. Perspective-taking activities require assessment criteria that reflect these objectives.

The major fault lies not with the criteria, but with the instruction provided the students. The most persuasive explanation for the students' marginal success may be that most of them lacked sufficient knowledge about how things were done in the past to succeed in the assignment. History instruction designed to help students engage in perspective must take a different tack than that which students conventionally receive. The instruction that preceded the writing activities had exposed the students to the details of what people did, but not to how they did it or how they thought about doing it. Instruction that has historical thinking as a goal should place greater emphasis on the underlying structures and processes of everyday life. As these processes were very different from those of today, the instruction should also help students create distance between the past and the present. For example, Samuel's Indian narrative let us see a bit of the world through the eyes of someone from a different culture and time. He did this by placing his imaginary character at a considerable distance from himself, in terms of age, natural environment, and values. History teaching for historical thinking probably should focus more on the differences than on the continuities between past and present. Teachers interested in promoting historical thinking could do worse than adopt as their motto the quote from L. P. Hartley, which David Lowenthal abstracted as the title for a book, "The past is a foreign country, they do things differently there (Lowenthal, 1985).

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